

the chamber by a partition, a store for closable cassettes arranged in the housing, and a handling device for closable cassettes arranged in the housing.

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As a result, the sorting options are considerably increased, due to the fact that all the cassettes in the storage device are available to the sorting device. In addition, the necessary measurements can also be carried out during sorting without the need for transportation to a separate measuring station. Consequently, the number of handling operations decreases and the capacity of the device can be increased while reducing the surface area required. If the wafers are supplied and stored in cassettes in pods provided with a standard door (SMIF, FOUP), fewer lock mechanisms are required than with the three or more separate housings according to the prior art. If certain types of wafer are always present in a specific cassette, it is possible, by changing cassettes of this nature into a different cassette which is present in the sorting device, to assemble a batch as desired. Naturally, it is also possible to arrange different types of wafers in a storage cassette, so that exchange in the sorting device is less frequent.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 8, 9 and 13 as follows:

- Sub D, 17
8. (Amended) A device for sorting wafers stored in cassettes comprising:
a housing;
a wafer handling device arranged in a chamber configured to be sealed off with respect to the housing;
a part for receiving at least two closable cassettes arranged in the housing and separated from said chamber by a partition, said part configured to position a received cassette against a closable opening in said partition, wherein through opening of said closable opening said closable cassette is opened and placed in communication with said chamber so that said wafer handling device can remove wafers from the cassette or position them therein;
a store for closable cassettes arranged in the housing; and
a handling device for closable cassettes arranged in the housing, wherein the store for closable cassettes and the handling device for closable cassettes are separated from the part for receiving at least two cassettes, and wherein the wafer-handling device is adapted to transfer the wafers between cassettes.

B3 9. (Amended) The device of Claim 8, wherein the device is configured for sorting wafers stored in FOUPs.

Sub D2 13. (Amended) A method for assembling a batch of wafers in cassettes comprising the steps of:

placing at least a first and a second closed cassette in a store;

employing a cassette handling device to select and move the first cassette from the store to a sorting operation, wherein the first cassette is opened and placed in active connection with a wafer handling device in a chamber;

employing a cassette handling device to select and move a second cassette from the store to a sorting operation, wherein the second cassette is opened and placed in active connection with said wafer handling device in said chamber; and

employing said wafer-handling device to sort the wafers by transferring wafers between the first cassette and second cassettes, wherein the chamber is sealed.

Sub D3 15. (New) A method for assembling a batch of wafers in cassettes comprising the steps of:

placing at least a first and a second closed cassette in a store;

employing a cassette handling device to select and move a first cassette from the store to a first closable opening in a sealed chamber;

opening said first closable opening together with said first cassette;

employing a cassette handling device to select and move a second cassette from the store to a second closable opening in said sealed chamber;

opening said second closable opening together with said second cassette;

employing the wafer-handling device, provided in said sealed chamber, to sort the wafers by transferring wafers between the first cassette and second cassettes.
